



## RESOLUTION #31

### TITLE: Asia-Pacific Collaboration for Wilderness Values: Kamchatka, UNDP and International Cooperation

#### Development of Protected Areas System

**WHEREAS**, in Russia, opportunities still exist to preserve large areas of intact wilderness, and legislation allows for protection of wilderness only through creation of protected areas.

**THEREFORE**, WILD9 commends the continuing positive and collaborative work of the Russian government, NGO's, and the scientific community in determining a list of high priority areas for conserving Russia's representative biological diversity according to the obligations of the Convention on Biodiversity.

**RESOLVED**, we recommend that, based on the results of this gap analysis, as well as regional land planning efforts, the Russian government strive to create networks of protected areas with connecting corridors to allow for wildlife migrations and adaptation to climate change.

#### Climate change

**WHEREAS**, considering the significance of climate change impacts on biodiversity, particularly observable in the Russian Arctic, which represents more than 25% of the world's Arctic area, and gaps in information and awareness;

**THEREFORE**, we welcome the efforts of the Russian government in passing legislation on climate change issues; in acknowledging the urgency of this global reality.

**RESOLVED**, we recommend comprehensive interagency cooperation, from logistical planning and data sharing, to a policy of support at the local through federal levels of government; the systematic collection and analysis of scientific information on climate change, effects on wilderness of regions having globally important biodiversity (emphasis on the Russian Arctic and Kamchatka), as well using the data which establish links between climate change on biodiversity, and biodiversity on climate change, in order to provide better clarity for decision making regarding these values and the irreversibility and magnitude of these effects.

#### Salmon conservation

**WHEREAS**, considering the importance of Pacific salmon on the biological, economic, and cultural components of the entire North Pacific region; recognizing the key role of Russia in preserving the world's wild salmon, as well as recognizing Russia's contribution to conserving pristine and robust salmon rivers through the creation of the *first-in-the-world* salmon refuge on Kamchatka's Kol River.

**THEREFORE**, we commend the actions of the Russia's government, NGO's, and scientific communities who have collaborated to establish this monumental refuge, as a model for the world in stewardship and proactive conservation of pristine and robust wilderness.

**RESOLVED**, we recommend that by 2015 Russia, the United States, Canada and Japan work together in establishing protected area networks for the conservation of key salmon rivers, and we call upon all stakeholders in the North Pacific region, including but not limited to the governments of these four countries, development companies in the region (Gazprom, Sakhalin Energy Investment Corporation, and [REDACTED]), NGOs (Wild Salmon Center, World Wildlife Fund, UNDP, Pacific Environment, and others), and scientific institutions (All Russian Scientific Fishery Institute, the Russian Academy of Sciences and corresponding institutions in other countries) to work toward expanding the successful model of Russia's Kamchatka Kol River salmon refuge to secure the sustainability of other important salmon rivers in the Russian Far East and the rest of the North Pacific Rim.

### **Participation of civil society and NGOs**

**WHEREAS**, considering the importance of the role of nongovernmental and scientific organizations in:

- exchange of scientific and technical information,
- development of management strategies for shared resources, and
- involvement of local communities and civil society in decision-making processes.

**THEREFORE**, WILD9 observes the need for formal acknowledgement by the Russian government and other countries of the North Pacific Region of civil society's efforts for wilderness conservation and the need for increasing openness and participatory decision-making.

**RESOLVED**, we urgently call upon the government of the Russian Federation and other countries of the North Pacific Region to universally and openly support the activities of nongovernmental environmental organizations, and to consider the following activities most important for supporting a greater role for civil society in:

- exchange of scientific and technical information,
  - development of management strategies for shared resources,
  - involvement of local communities and civil society in decision-making processes,
- we recommend to develop various types of collaboration.

### **Financial mechanisms**

**WHEREAS**, Russia has the entire protected areas system, consisting 12,000 protected areas, covers more than 200 million hectares, or 12% of the country, including 101 strict nature reserves and 41 national parks; the most effective measures for wilderness conservation.

**THEREFORE**, WILD9 commends effective and positive role of Russia's protected areas for wilderness conservation; takes into account that government financing is insufficient for ensuring effective protected area management, as well as the positive experience of the UNDP/GEF model in Russia.

**RESOLVED**, we recommend that a financial mechanism for sustainable financing protected areas will be developed, based on the results of the UNDP/GEF model in Russia.

### **Ecotourism**

**WHEREAS** Kamchatka, Russia wilderness is home to 10% of the world's active volcanoes, over fourteen thousand pristine rivers where 25% of the world's wild Pacific salmon spawn, which provide food for the Earth's largest populations of Steller sea eagles, and Kamchatka brown bear, vital resting stops for hundreds of thousands of migrating water birds, and are a growing attraction for Russian and foreign tourists as one of the world's last best wilderness areas to experience;

**THEREFORE** Kamchatka's ecotourism stakeholders provide a vital partnership toward sustaining this wilderness through collaborations between protected areas and NGOs like World Wildlife Fund, the Kamchatka Ecotourism Society; concerned members of the international scientific community, between responsible tour operators; volunteer organizations; and Kamchatka's aboriginal cultures to create a viable ecotourism industry in Kamchatka, which the Kamchatka Visitor Survey of 2007-2008 demonstrated have substantial economic, social, and conservation benefits to the peninsula through adherence to conservation values and responsible tourism.

It is **RESOLVED** that the Kamchatka ecotourism sustainable partnerships between protected areas, the Kamchatka Ecotourism Society, other NGOs with an interest in Kamchatka wilderness conservation and international scientific researchers continue to:

- Work together with the Alaska/Russia Protected Area Research Team, to develop a better understanding of the economic impact of tourism on the region's economy through a repeat of the Kamchatka Visitor Survey within the next 4 years;
- Focus visitor studies in collaboration with APART (Alaska Russia Protected Area Research Team) on each of the protected areas to assist them to develop better management plans and to strengthen their role in the region's economy within the next 2 years and onward;
- Continue educating the regional and federal agencies overseeing the protected areas and resource development of the vitality and real economic contribution of tourism through disseminating analysis results of the Kamchatka Visitor Survey 2007-2008 and future studies as well as through continued public programs and collaborative programs between the Kamchatka Ecotourism Society, Association for Kamchatka Protected Areas, and the "Our Sphere" Kamchatka Protected Areas Training Center over the next 4 years as this research is expanded and as each of these organizations works to balance economic development with conservation needs.

**PROPOSERS:**

Olga Krever, Expert on Protected Areas and Biodiversity Conservation in Russia, Member of the Upper Environmental Council of the Committee of Natural Resources, Natural Resources Use and Environment of the Russian Federal Parliament;

Laura Williams, Senior Advisor of Wild Salmon Center and WWF-Russia;

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Marta Madson, Kamchatka Ecotourism Society.

**SECONDER:**

Damon Bowen,

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